



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MOLINA, YWCA GREATER LOS ANGELES AND EAST L.A. COMMUNITY
CELEBRATE NEW EMPOWERMENT AND CHILD CARE CENTER**

Services to Enrich the Lives of Children and Families

Dedication May 15 at 10:45 a.m.

EAST LOS ANGELES (May 15, 2010) – Los Angeles County Supervisor Gloria Molina and YWCA Greater Los Angeles CEO Faye Washington were joined today by East Los Angeles residents in dedicating the new YWCA Greater Los Angeles Union Pacific Empowerment Center at 10:45 a.m., Saturday, May 15 during a neighborhood block party celebration at 4315 Union Pacific Avenue, East L.A. 90023. Block party was held from:10:00am. to 2:00pm.

"We are proud of the involvement of our East Los Angeles residents who helped shape this model, state-of-the-art Empowerment and Child Care Center," said Molina. "The comprehensive programs and services offered by the YWCA Greater Los Angeles in this culturally empowering facility will enrich the lives of our community's children and families."

The day's festivities will kick off with the official dedication and ribbon cutting ceremony and proceed with a variety of activities and attractions for the entire family including face painting, free food, live performances, special appearances, vendor booths, cooking demonstrations and tours of the UPEC facility.

"Our parents aren't just dropping off kids - we are gearing up to provide them with services as identified by them. Once we ascertained the community needed more than childcare services, we formed an Empowerment Council which includes fifteen members from the East Los Angeles community. The Empowerment Council has offered critical direction for programs that we are now implementing," stated Faye Washington.

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The UPEC facility offers services and programs in (1) Early Childhood and Education; (2) Youth Empowerment and Leadership; (3) Senior Services; (4) Special Needs; (5) Computer Lab and Internet Café, sponsored by Edison International; (6) Community Cohesion and Empowerment. In addition, the Center will offer computer training, language classes, financial education, and parenting classes.

"It is crucial that we listen to our communities and provide them with programs they need," Washington added. "One focus that materialized out of the Empowerment Council meetings was the need for senior programming. There will be many offerings for this population including congregate meals, activities, and socializing, exercise, and language classes," said Washington. "We want to engage this community holistically. Family unity will be promoted through community-wide events such as family nights and movie nights."

"We are so excited to see the opening of this wonderful program site in our community, our home, where we grew up," stated Ellen Chapa, a community member who served on the Empowerment Council. "I've had the privilege of watching the Union Pacific Empowerment Center impact this area positively and now to have programming for the entire community - it's really amazing. I've always dreamed of having programs especially for my mom and other seniors in this in this neighborhood. I am honored to have been part of the process."

As part of Molina's commitment to children and families and to increasing community and child care services in the East L.A. community, more than eight years ago, the YWCA GLA opened an earlier version of UPEC serving 45 preschool children. Operating out of a small modular building, it became clear that the community need was greater. Now with 80 spots for children, including infants, UPEC has grown into much more than a child development facility.

The newest of four YWCA GLA Empowerment centers, construction for the \$9 million Union Pacific Empowerment Center began September 24, 2008 and was completed October 7, 2009. The other Empowerment centers are located in Central LA, Compton and the San Fernando Valley.

For more information about programs offered and registration at the Union Pacific Empowerment Center, contact (323) 415-6057. Registration for programs at the center will also take place at the Block Party Saturday, May 15. —end—